

Style Sheet for Political Science

Ole J. Forsberg, Ph.D.
Creighton University

Rationale

For all assignments not written during class, the following style sheet must be followed. Your grade depends on presentation of ideas, not just the ideas themselves. Make sure your assignments represent what you wish to portray about yourself. I will say this here:

Effort is irrelevant. Product is everything.

Mechanics

- All Margins: 1.00–1.25 in. This is the standard setting for all major word processing programs.
- Spacing: 1½ or double-spacing—your choice.
- Font: 12 point, Arial or Times New Roman.

Citations and References

- We use *neither* MLA nor AP style; we use APSA.
- Inline citations and reference list must be done using APSA style. If you do not have the latest edition of the APSA Style Manual (as few in this world do), you may download the relevant parts from the course website.
- The reference list is ***not*** a bibliography. In the reference list, you give full reference of all works you use in your paper.
- Remember to cite (and reference) your sources of information, not just your quotes. Failure to do so is considered plagiarism.

Headers

- First page: Full name in the upper-right corner, Assignment title beneath that, Date assignment done beneath that.
- Others: Last name and page number on same line in upper-right corner.

Headings

- First-level headings are base font, **bolded**.
- Second-level headings are base font, *italicized*.
- Both of these two are on a separate line.

Miscellaneous

- For multi-page papers, make sure you ***staple*** it together; paper clips cause more problems than they are worth.
- If you have a quotation that lasts more than three lines (extended quotation), it needs to be a separate paragraph and flush-left indent. No quotation marks are used, and the citation goes outside the closing punctuation.
- You may print front-to-back if you wish, especially if you want to kill as few trees as possible.

General Caveats

- Proofread the paper at least twice. Have someone else proofread the paper. When you proofread the paper, make sure what you wrote makes logical and grammatical sense. Specifically, watch the logic, the spelling, and the grammar. Read what you wrote, not what you intended to write.
- Always make sure your assertions are backed up with cited facts.
- ‘United States’ is a ***singular*** noun, as is ‘United Nations’.
- Beware of dangling (and unnecessary) prepositions.
- Avoid unnecessary adjectives and adverbs. Do not use two words when one will do.
- Write in the active voice.
- Use a thesaurus to enrich your vocabulary, though not to excess.
- Do not procrastinate. Doing so will limit your ability to follow these warnings.

Plagiarism

- Plagiarism is a very serious academic crime. It is both cheating and lying. It signifies both academic deceit and academic laziness. Failing to cite a source of information (including ideas and data) is plagiarism. Furthermore, failing to signify quoted material as being quoted is plagiarism. The punishment for plagiarism is failure in the course. Additional steps will be taken, up to and including expulsion from the university, if the plagiarism is significant and/or blatant.

Some Helpful Books

- These books are available in the library. All college students should have a copy of either Chicago or Strunk, as both are invariably helpful in writing better.

Chicago Manual of Style (15th edition). Call Number: Z253 .U69 2003

The Elements of Style, William Strunk, Jr. Call Number: PE1408 .S772

Style Manual for Political Science. Call Number: JA86 .A52 2001